Tuna Sweetcorn Cream Cheese Cups

4 spoonable tuna-corn cream-cheese cups, about 145–150 ml each; small cold fish-course portions · Active 30 min · Total 6 hr 30 min

Ingredients

- 1 standard ¼-ounce envelope unflavored powdered gelatin (7 g), of specified setting strength
- 3 tablespoons cold drinking water (45 ml)
- ½ cup pasteurized whole milk (120 ml), divided
- 5¼ oz plain pasteurized full-fat cream cheese (150 g), kept cold
- 2 teaspoons lemon juice (10 ml)
- 7 oz fully cooked ready-to-eat canned tuna (200 g AFTER draining), flaked small and kept cold
- ½ cup ready-to-eat canned sweetcorn AFTER draining (80 g), patted dry
- ⅛ teaspoon black pepper

Set out

Blender suitable for cold dairy, Small saucepan, Mixing bowl and spatula, Sieve and fork, Scale and measuring jug, 4 wide shallow refrigerator-safe cups of at least 200 ml capacity each, Food thermometer, Refrigerator

Allergens

Fish (tuna), Milk. Check labels and substitutions.

Make it

1. Read tuna label, drain, flake small and keep cold. Drain and dry corn. Blend cream cheese with 60 ml milk until smoother, transfer to mixing bowl and refrigerate. Set out four clean 200 ml cups; these are spoon cups and need no oil.

2. Bloom gelatin over 45 ml cold water in small saucepan 5–10 minutes. Add remaining 60 ml milk and warm gently while stirring until dissolved, about 120–140°F (50–60°C), then remove before boiling.

3. Whisk 3 tablespoons cold cream-cheese mixture gradually into warm gelatin. When smooth and lukewarm, whisk back into remaining cold base with lemon and pepper. Refrigerate 15–20 minutes until cool and just beginning to thicken. Fold in cold tuna and dry corn.

4. Spoon evenly among cups, about 145–150 ml each, leaving at least ½ inch (1.25 cm) headroom; use a separate small cup for excess. Cover and refrigerate at 40°F (4°C) or below at least 4 hours until softly set. Allow 6½ hours total including draining, cooling and a margin for the cups to set. Serve cold with spoons; do not unmold.

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Gelatin starting strength

Use food-grade unflavored powdered gelatin with a manufacturer benchmark of 7 g for about 2 cups (500 ml) plain liquid. Weigh the stated grams: envelope sizes and powder density vary. A flavored dessert packet, collagen peptides, sheet gelatin or agar is not an equal substitute.

Cold service

This is an original retro-inspired recipe, not a recovered 1960s formula. Gelatin is animal-derived; the vegetable ingredients do not make the dish vegetarian. A reliable refrigerator and the stated earlier ingredient deadlines are essential.

Ingredient labels

Read canned fish, cream cheese, corn and gelatin labels for additional allergens and shared-equipment statements.

A useful detail

Water, milk and lemon total 175 ml. Cream cheese 150 g, tuna 200 g and corn 80 g produce roughly 600 ml mixture. Seven grams gelatin is used for a soft spoon set, not an unmolded slice. The four 200 ml cups provide space above 150 ml fills.

Keep it well

Keep covered at 40°F (4°C) or below and use within 24 hours of final assembly, including the overnight set, or the earliest tuna, dairy or other ingredient deadline, whichever is sooner. Keep cumulative unrefrigerated preparation and service below 2 hours, or 1 hour above 90°F (32°C); discard beyond those limits. Do not freeze the finished gel.